

GMAT XXII Meeting Minutes
St. Croix Crossing Growth Management Advisory Team
St. Croix County Government Center
Wednesday, January 13, 2016

Call the meeting to order

Dan Baumann, WDNR WC Secretary's Director, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Updates & Check-ins

DOTs – Beth Cunningham, WisDOT informed GMAT members that MN DOT has reported a delay on the bridge construction on the Minnesota side. Completion of the work is not expected until late 2017. Construction on the Wisconsin side is still on schedule. Winter work is underway on the bridge. The cast in place section is still being worked on. The delay of bridge work on the Minnesota side will delay some Wisconsin work as well. Clearing will begin in March, with construction resuming in May. WisDOT construction, including the bike trail, will continue into 2018. This construction will include the building of a salt shed, park and ride, road alterations, as well as landscaping.

Basin Team - Jerry provided a handout of project updates and reported that all projects are either complete or nearly complete. SWAT modeling and the "State of the Lake" report will be completed soon. The Basin Team has a Strategic Plan in place that they are currently updating. Once the update is complete, the Team will be pursuing additional funding opportunities to complete the work.

The Basin Team is assisting with the planning for the St. Croix Summit in March. The Summit will be in River Falls, and will be held over a two day period. The Workshop on the Water River Tour will be held again this summer.

St Croix County – Brett Budrow reported that the Bike and Pedestrian Trail planning project has completed the first series of open houses/listening sessions. They have almost completed the study for enhancement and improvements to the trails. St. Croix County has taken multiple forms of public input. They have also been taking input from public and private groups, and will focus on the top 5-6 priorities. This will include looking at the costs to do the improvements. They will also be setting up a second set of open houses.

The bridge has design elements to assist with trails and connection to other trails to complete the loop. The plan is extensive, and implementation will be an issue.

Economic development is an important part of the Bike and Pedestrian Trail project. People were able to come in and work through the community service tool of the Economic Development Plan as a result of St. Croix County's Economic Analysis Project.

St. Croix County has had delays, but is moving forward with the Comprehensive Revision of Zoning Ordinances Project submission. A law firm will work on the update pieces. The County will not need to hire a planning firm. However, two new employees are being hired.

St. Croix County has used part of their \$2,000,000 in acquisition funds to acquire parcels. They have purchased the Joyce Trust, C.A. Richards property and the Margaret Orr addition to the boat landing. A total of \$880,000 in acquisition funds remain.

UW-River Falls – Mike Stifter of UW-River Falls attended in place of Danielle Campo. UWRF continues to develop a project to partner on Rain to Rivers with the Hwy 64 coalition and is looking into organizing an Intergovernmental Collaboration event to link planning and implementation opportunities associated with water quality improvement.

Town of St. Joseph – Tom Spaniol reported that the Town is working on their top three projects. They are, a connection from the top loop trail to Somerset, completion of the Pedestrian Trail Plan, and the Comprehensive Plan. The Town is also applying for a tap grant. They will be working with WisDOT on timing. This work will be part of their outdoor recreation plan as well as part of the comp plan.

At the next Comprehensive Plan meeting, they will start looking at maps for layout. The Town will start having discussions regarding zoning commercial, residential, etc.

The Natural Resource Inventory Plan field work was completed in early December. The NRI report is being written.

Town of St. Joseph has applied for a transportation alternative program grant. They will need to provide a match, hopefully with greenspace funds and money the Town has collected. They are also waiting on TAP Grant information so they can begin writing a proposal.

The St Croix Crossing Coordinator position has been eliminated. The Town of St. Joseph will vacate the remainder of the funds allocated for this position.

Corridor Community Coalition – All municipal wastewater treatment plants are updating their facility plans utilizing mitigation funds. The Coalition also approved a project to do an assessment in the Town of Richmond (Burkhard sanitary district).

New Richmond and the Town of St. Joseph received funding for a stormwater urban nonpoint source projects. The development of tools and deliverables are being discussed as well as what townships can use. Ordinances and identifying areas sensitive to stormwater impacts are being worked on as well. The Coalition is working on a proposal with Rain to Rivers to be a “pilot” member through the duration of the mitigation funding cycle.

WDNR – Dan Baumann informed the group that none of the acquisition money allotted to WDNR has been spent yet. This may be due to the fact that WDNR purchases are confined to appraised value. We will continue to work on projects, and look at collective partnering for obtaining money. WDNR is developing the Mitigation annual report and will submit the report to MnDOT, WisDOT and the Federal Highway Commission by June 1, 2016.

Discussion of proposed projects

No new projects were submitted for review.

Recommendations of GMAT members

No proposed projects were submitted for recommendations.

Additional Discussion

Deb Ryun reported that a Natalie Warren, is working with communities from Stillwater down river on education and outreach. She is working with elected officials on subjects such as zoning and variances. She is also conducting realtor and developer outreach. Deb suggested she might be an asset we could use.

The group asked if there will be an extension to the timeframe of spending the Greenspace funds since there is a delay in the completion of the bridge.

The issue of changes to WI Adm. Code NR115, passed in Wisconsin's 2015 budget was brought forward by members of GMAT. The group is concerned that shoreland zoning law changes decrease the level of protection that County's work with riparian owners to provide for water quality. Act 55 states that no county can be more restrictive than the state minimum standards identified in WI Adm. Code NR 115. The group voiced concern, stating that all counties are different.

Next Meeting Date – The next GMAT meeting will be a conference call on Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. The number to join the call is: 1-888-291-0079 passcode: 7689 517#

Present:

Dan Baumann, WDNR
Tom Spaniol, Town of St. Joseph
Beth Cunningham, Wis DOT
Ellen Denzer, St. Croix County
Mike Stifter, UW-River Falls
Blake Fry, Hudson Chamber

Jerry Spetzman
Deb Ryun
Bob Fitzwilliams
Brett Budrow
Tammy Wittmer
Susan Snyder